



Rhode Island College Alumni Association
Michael E. Smith, President

July 28, 2020

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chair, House Finance Committee
82 Smith Street
Room 306 State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Representative Abney:

I write today on behalf of the Rhode Island College Alumni Association to express our fullest commitment for the proposed bond referendum to support renovation and expansion of Clarke Science Hall on our campus.

The Rhode Island College Alumni Association currently includes over 63,000 members, with more than 70% living and working in Rhode Island. Collectively, we represent a vital core of the state's educated workforce that contributes so much to the state's economy and social well-being. We are especially proud to see that the student body of today represents the rich diversity of our state. It is essential that these students be provided the advantages of a state-of-the-art building necessary for study in the sciences.

The Clarke Science building is nearly sixty years old. Designed in another era, it is today woefully inadequate for its purpose. Issues with power, HVAC, plumbing, circulation, and other basic concerns impede the learning process for today's students. It was also constructed at a time when enrollment at Rhode Island College was barely more than a thousand. Today, the building must serve more than six times that number.

Rhode Island College is well-known for its commitment to renovation and expansion of existing facilities as opposed to demolition and new construction. It has proven to be a cost-effective, taxpayer-friendly strategy for incrementally rebuilding an ageing campus.

The Alumni Association is grateful to the General Assembly for its past support of the College and is hopeful that this modest proposal will similarly meet with approval. We thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Michael E. Smith, President
Rhode Island College Alumni Association